

Strickland to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife; that there be 3 hours of debate with respect to the nomination, with 1 hour under the control of the majority and 2 hours under the control of the Republicans and 30 minutes of the Republican time under the control of Senator BUNNING; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination; that the confirmation require an affirmative 60-vote threshold; that upon achieving that threshold, the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, there be no further motions in order, and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate resume legislative session.

So after we dispose of the Durbin amendment, we will move to the Dodd amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to express my appreciation to Senator BUNNING who has been very reasonable in this process. There are certain things he wanted. He didn't get what he felt he was entitled to. Looking at his request, I think it was very reasonable. Senator BUNNING has not been unfair in the questions he asked. I appreciate his allowing us to get this consent agreement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar Nos. 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, and all nominations on the Secretary's Desk in the Coast Guard; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, and the motions to reconsider be laid on the table en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

April S. Boyd, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Robert S. Rivkin, of Illinois, to be General Counsel of the Department of Transportation.

Roy W. Kienitz, of Pennsylvania, to be Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy.

Peter H. Appel, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, Department of Transportation.

Dana G. Gresham, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation.

Joseph C. Szabo, of Illinois, to be Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Sherburne B. Abbott, of Texas, to be an Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

IN THE COAST GUARD

The following named officer for appointment as Vice Commandant of the United States Coast Guard and to the grade indicated under Title 14, U.S.C., Section 47:

To be vice admiral

Vice Adm. David P. Pekoske

The following named officer for appointment as Chief of Staff of the United States Coast Guard and to the grade indicated under Title 14, U.S.C., Section 50a:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. John P. Currier

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Coast Guard to the grade indicated under title 14, U.S.C., section 271:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

Capt. Robert E. Day, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment as Commander, Pacific Area of the United States Coast Guard and to the grade indicated under Title 14, U.S.C., Section 50:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Jody A. Breckenridge

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE COAST GUARD

PN190 COAST GUARD nomination of Michael J. McNeil, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2009.

PN191 COAST GUARD nomination of Desarae A. Janszen, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of March 17, 2009.

NOMINATION OF RONALD H. WEICH TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mr. REID. I now ask that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 65.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The nomination will be stated.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ronald H. Weich, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate considers another of President Obama's highly-qualified nominees for an important post in the executive branch. Earlier today, the Judiciary Committee reported favorably the nomination of Ron Weich to be Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legislative Affairs at the Department of Justice. I had hoped that we could expedite this nomination before the recess so that Mr. Weich could begin doing his job for the American people, but lack of cooperation from the Republican side prevented us from confirming the nomination then. I am pleased that with cooperation today, we will confirm Mr. Weich.

In more than a decade on Capitol Hill, Ron Weich has advised three Senators: Senator SPECTER, Senator KENNEDY, and now Majority Leader REID, who introduced Mr. Weich at his hearing 3 weeks ago and strongly recommended his confirmation.

At his hearing, I put into the record a letter from Senator KENNEDY describing Mr. Weich as a "lawyer of exceptional intelligence, skill, and sound

judgment" and praising his "remarkable ability . . . to work extremely well with Members and staff on both sides of the aisle and to guide us toward creative solutions to seemingly intractable problems." Many of Mr. Weich's former Republican colleagues wrote to this committee to attest to the fact that he is highly regarded among both Republican and Democratic staff, and they spoke of his "respect for opposing views" and his "constructive approach to difficult legal issues." They described him as "honorable and trustworthy." And of course, Mr. Weich is equally well-respected outside of this chamber. A letter from the Fraternal Order of Police highlights his "long and sterling career as a public safety policymaker" and notes that he is "a passionate champion for justice."

In addition, Mr. Weich has a distinguished record of public service as an assistant district attorney in Manhattan, and as a special counsel to the United States Sentencing Commission. He is an experienced Senate hand who has earned the respect of Senators on both sides of the aisle. We know him well as a former member of the staff of the Judiciary Committee. I am confident he will be a welcome addition to the leadership at the Justice Department, and will make the Department more responsive to congressional concerns than we have seen over the last several years.

I congratulate Mr. Weich and his family on his confirmation today and look forward to working with him in his new capacity at the Justice Department.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Ronald H. Weich, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Attorney General?

The nomination was confirmed.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider be laid on the table and there be no further motions in order; that any statements relating to this nomination be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

CONFIRMATION OF RON WEICH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before I turn this over to Senator DURBIN to close, I want to say a word or two about this nomination we just completed. That is the nomination of Ron Weich.

I know Ron has waited with his family for a long time to get this done, but I have tremendously mixed emotions. A part of me was saying: I wish maybe